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THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS

REPRESENTATIVES from more than one hundred art associations throughout the United States met in Chicago on May 21st, 22d and 23d in the Convention held for the fifth successive season by the American Federation of Arts. The points from whence these delegates came were as widely separated as Tampa, Florida, and Seattle, Washington; Dallas, Texas, and St. Paul, Minnesota, and the interests they represented were no more limited in range. There were artists and teachers of art, museum directors, members of art commissions, collectors and critics, each with an individual and local viewpoint, yet all imbued with a sense of the value of art and impelled by a single impulse to cultivate its appreciation in America.

Five sessions were held in Fullerton Memorial Hall in the Art Institute of Chicago, at all of which the president, Mr. Robert W. de Forest, presided. An address of welcome was made at the opening session by the Mayor of Chicago, Hon. Carter H. Harrison, who spoke briefly but thoughtfully of the development of art and its relation to the municipality. Following the review of the year's work, given by the Secretary, Mr. Frank W. Crowninshield, of New York, at one time Art Editor of *The Century*, gave an exceedingly interesting and entertaining talk on "Art and the Modern Magazine," describing some of the difficulties which confront both art editor and illustrator, letting the audience in, as it were, behind the scenes, telling engagingly what almost seemed to be some "tales out of school," but in reality simply giving his hearers a better and more intimate knowledge of the practical side of contemporary magazine illustrating, its possibilities and limitations, than they could have got in any other way.

At the afternoon session on the 21st Mr. R. Clipston Sturgis, President of the

American Institute of Architects, gave an address on "Parks and Playgrounds" in which he urged the value of outdoor recreation for the city dweller, and in like measure the importance of properly developed private grounds for the suburban dweller—something much neglected, he declared, in this country. Mr. Sturgis's address was illustrated by stereopticon slides of small estates in England admirably and artistically developed. This may, indeed, well be considered one of the problems of art and its development—the love of beauty given expression in home surroundings.

Somewhat the same thought in quite different guise was presented by the next speaker, Mr. Maurice I. Flagg, who told of the work of the Minnesota State Art Society, not only in holding and circulating exhibitions, but in conserving and cultivating the native crafts of the State's foreign-born citizens and in securing for the farmers designs for model farm houses to replace the wretched homes which now dot the rural communities. These designs were secured through a local competition and strong exception was taken by some of the delegates present to the first prize design which was displayed. That the project was commendable all were, however, agreed.

Mr. Sturgis spoke of the home grounds, Mr. Flagg laid emphasis on the home structurally, Mr. William Sloane Coffin, the third speaker at this session, referred entirely to the decorations and furnishings of the home, telling of the way in which those employed in the art trades of New York have endeavored to learn the significance of art in design and what results have accrued. Mr. Coffin's address opened new vistas to many of his listeners and suggested educational work along new and what evidently would prove productive lines.

The morning session on the 22d was entirely given over to the subject of "Art

Commissions." The first paper was by Mr. Charles Moore, of Detroit, a member of the Federal Art Commission, and was on "The Selection of Artists to Execute Public Works." Mr. Moore vigorously urged the right of artists to have their works judged by their peers, and hence the establishment of artist juries to judge competitions. He also urged, however, the giving of commissions for public monuments by direct choice rather than through competitions, and he told of some interesting happenings in connection with both methods of choice. Mr. Moore was followed by Mr. Thomas Allen, of Boston, who told humorously of the way in which the art commission idea had been initiated in and stolen from Boston, and how the original errors of ignorance had been copied as well as the good. The third speaker was Mr. Lorado Taft who lay special stress upon the need of art commissions both for cities and States, and commissions fully imbued with not only veto powers, but initiative ability. A striking demonstration of the value of such expert commissions was given by Mr. Andrew Wright Crawford, of Philadelphia, who, with a few words of introduction and explanation, displayed upon the screen a series of designs submitted to art commissions and rejected, followed by those subsequently accepted. Such witness was not to be impuned. Among those who took part in the discussion which ensued was Dr. John Quincy Adams, Secretary of the New York Art Commission.

Friday afternoon was occupied by a tour in automobiles, generously lent by their Chicago private owners, through the beautiful parks of the city, many miles in extent, lovely in spring foliage, ideally located on the shore of the sea-like lake. First, Lincoln Park, with a halt at the Lincoln statue, one of Saint-Gaudens' masterpieces which is indeed beautifully placed; then Jackson Park, past the old exposition grounds, past the Field Museum—the one time palace of Fine Arts—past the University, and the Midway which some time may be turned into a stretch of water spanned with bridges and ornamented by Lorado

Taft's great sculptural conception which is even now taking form; on and on to Sherman Park where another halt was made to inspect mural paintings by students of the Art Institute in one of the park houses which are Chicago's recreation centers free to all, and where some charming folk dances given in costume by children were witnessed. And again on until at five o'clock more than ninety much-delighted delegates were dropped at the hospitable home of Mrs. W. W. Kimball for a private view of her choice collection of Old World masters, and a cup of tea. Among Mrs. Kimball's treasures are a Rembrandt, a Constable, a Turner, a Reynolds and a Gainsborough, which will not soon be forgotten by those who saw them. Chicago is famed for generous hospitality and certainly it has not in the present instance lessened its reputation. All of the delegates to this Convention were entertained at lunch both Thursday and Friday in the Art Institute and at dinner the same days at the Cliff Dwellers' Club. The galleries of the Art Institute were thrown open to them on Thursday evening and every privilege was extended within the power of the local committee which acted as hosts. That this hospitality was shared in part by the representatives of the American Museums Association, which held its closing session in Chicago after meeting for two days in Milwaukee, added to the pleasure both at the time and in retrospect. These two organizations, whose aims are so nearly similar as to be described by their respective presidents at one of the luncheons as "second cousins," have never before come into touch with one another and from the closer acquaintanceship mutual good must result.

The one evening session held on Friday, the 22d, was devoted exclusively to the American Federation of Arts, the Secretary telling something of how it was formed and why; Mr. Hutchinson, its first President and present First Vice-President, giving its history, and Mr. de Forest speaking on the subject of its scope and future outlook. These and certain other addresses made at the Con-

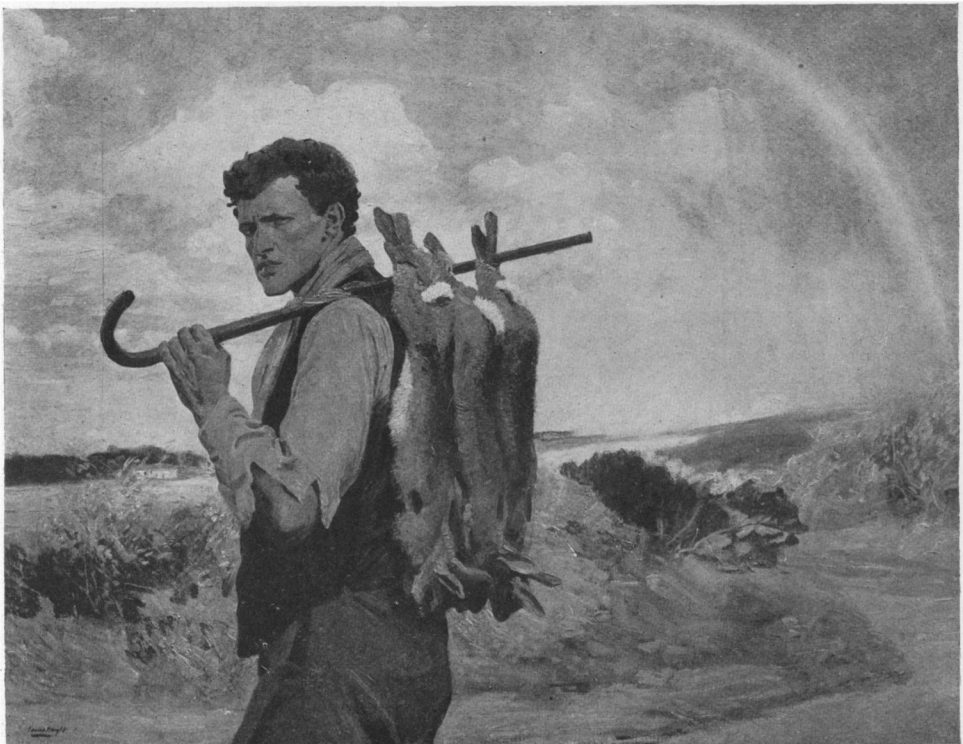
vention will, if possible, be printed in later issues of ART AND PROGRESS.

At the closing session on Saturday morning a comprehensive and thought-provoking address on "The Influence of World's Fairs upon the Development of Art," prepared by John E. D. Trask, Director of Fine Arts at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, was presented by Mr. Charles Francis Brown, his able assistant. There was at this and all the other sessions abundant time given for open discussion, and many excellent suggestions were given thus informally which will doubtless bear fruit. In accordance with the new Constitution seven directors were elected to serve for three years, the total number being twenty-one. These seven were Herbert Adams, Robert W. de Forest, Charles Allen Munn, Frederick B. Pratt, Mrs. Gustav Radeke, George Dudley Seymour and Lorado Taft. By the direc-

tors the officers are elected, but there being an insufficient number in attendance to constitute a quorum the election was postponed until a future date, the present officers holding over temporarily.

At the last session of the Convention an important resolution was offered by Mr. Cass Gilbert, a Vice-President of the Federation as well as past President of the American Institute of Architects, urging upon the Secretary of the Interior the importance of referring all alterations or improvements in the National Yosemite Park to the Federal Commission of Fine Arts in order that such may be made without injury to the natural beauty of this superb reservation.

The Convention adjourned at noon on Saturday, May 23d. Invitations were received to meet next year in San Francisco, Grand Rapids and other cities, and were all referred to the Board of Directors with power.



UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES

LAURA KNIGHT

SHOWN IN A SPECIAL EXHIBITION AT THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, MAY, 1914